(b) Public places are already adequately covered by STD PCOs. Advertisements are oftenly given in the newspapers calling for applications from eligible candidates. Sanction of more STD/PCOs to eligible candidates at public places will be considered by STD/PCO Allotment Committees.

Demand for Telephones in Pentapadu Mandal in West Godawari District

72. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the existing demand for telephones in Pentapadu Mandal of West Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether it is a fact that about 200 people are in the waiting list from Alampuram Panchayat in Pentapadu Mandal for the last three years;

(c) whether local Telecom Authorities have taken any steps to meet this demand; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Total demand of 476 consisting of 254 working connections and 222 in the waiting list as on 31.10.96 in Pentapadu Mandal of West Godavari Distt. in Andhra Pradesh.

(b) No, Sir. As on 31.10.96 only 96 applicants are in the waiting list from Alampuram Panchayat in Pentapadu Mandal. The earliest application is of 1.4.1994.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) It is planned to upgrade the existing exchange at Alampuram Panchayat during 1996-97.

Letter Box at Sultanpuri, Delhi

73. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that P2 Block, Sultanpuri, Delhi which has an approximate population of over 5000, does not have a letter box forcing the people to traverse a considerable distance to post their letters;

(c) whether any representation through an Hon'ble MP has been received by the Chief Postmaster General' Office, Delhi in this regard; and

(c) if so, the steps Government have taken or are taking to establish a letter box at P2 block, Sultanpuri, Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) A Letter Box has been installed at P2 Block, Sultanpuri, Delhi on 15.11.1996.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Different rates for Telephone Services in the Rural Areas in Andhra Pradesh

74. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether uniform rent is being charged for telephones operating in rural areas;

(b) whether it is a fact that different rates are being charged in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh for telephones;

(c) whether any enquiry has been conducted in the matter; and

(d) the steps proposed to equalise rentals of rural phones in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. The rentals are being charged uniformly for telephones operating in rural areas based on the exchange system.

(b) The telephone rentals are being charged based on exchange system to which rural area pertains.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (b) above.

Non-payment of dues to Maharashtra by National Textile Corporation

75. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a letter in August, 1996 from Government of Maharashtra requesting for payment of a balance towards purchase of cotton by National Textile Corporation;

(b) if so, the details of the transaction alongwith the reasons for delay in payment; and

(c) by when Government will finalise the payment and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per the communication received from the Government of Maharashtra, the outstanding dues to Maharashtra State Cooperative Cotton Growers Marketing Federation from NTC are about Rs. 125 crores as on 31.3.96. However, as per the records of NTC, the dues are about Rs. 90 crores. NTC is carrying out necessary reconciliation.

Since cotton is purchased by the NTC mills on credit terms, there are bound to be certain outstanding dues at any given point of time. NTC is unable to clear the entire dues due to shortage of working capital. However, NTC is clearing the dues to the extent possible. The modernisation plan approved by the Government for rehabilitation of NTC mills provides for working capital requirements also. The rehabilitation plan is before the BIFR for approval. On approval of the plan by BIFR and availability of funds it is expected that NTC will clear cotton dues to the Maharashtra Federation.

राष्ट्रीय वस्त्र निगम की रुग्ण वस्त्र मिलें

76. **श्री राम जेठमलानी:** क्या वस्त्र मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि राष्ट्रीय वस्त्र निगम के नियंत्रणाधीन वस्त्र मिलें निरंतर घाटे में चल रही हैं;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार ने निरंतर होने वाले इस घाटे के कारणों की पहचान की है;

(ग) यदि हां, तो उनका ब्यौरा क्या है और प्रत्येक कारण के परिणामस्वरूप कितने प्रतिशत घाटा होने का अनुमान है; और

(घ) मार्च, 1996 के अंत तक इन इकाइयों को कुल कितनी राशि का घाटा हुआ?

वस्त्र मंत्री (श्री आर. एल. जालप्पा): (क) से (घ) मिलों को मुख्यत: अप्रचलित मशीनों, अत्यधिक मानव शक्ति, कम उत्पादकता, कार्यशील पूंजी की कमी, विद्युतकरघा क्षेत्र से प्रतिस्पर्धा, विद्युत की समस्याओं आदि के कारण घाटे हो रहे हैं। चूंकि एन. टी. सी. के अधीन 120 मिलें विभिन्न समय पर विभिन्न प्रकार की समस्याओं का सामना कर रहीं हैं इसलिए निरंतर घाटों के लिए उत्तरदायी इन कारकों में से प्रत्येक कारक का प्रतिशत बता पाना संभव नहीं है। 31.3.1996 तक की स्थिति के अनुसार, संचयी घाटा लगभग 4682 करोड़ रुपए है।

Reduction in cost of Passport Application

77. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to reduce the costs of passport applications; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The question does not arise.

Report of National Commission for Women on Women Prisoners

78. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received the recent report of National Commission for women in respect of women prisoners;

(b) if so, the findings of the report in so far as they relate to female undertrial prisoners; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) to (c) The question presumably refers to the report on jail visits by the Chairperson/Members of the National Commission for Women. This report titled "Women Prisoners in Indian Jails" contains, inter-alia, the following observations:

(i) More than 70% female jail population of the country consists of under-trials. Urgent steps need to be initiated for substantial reduction in the number of women in jails.

(ii) The proportion of female prisoners suffering from mental depression was